1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

142
291
293

PLATE V

Pelur, of Togh-vanu, wearing bark-board belt and penis-wrapper. He is singing a cannibal song while holding in his right hand the sacrificial wooden hatchet figured in Plate XXIV and Fig. 59

[facing p. 42]

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

But the couple were surprised by a Lavame man who had stayed at home. Now this man was a *Ghamba Lep*,[1] one of those who through membership of a well-known secret society can turn themselves into birds, and he resolved to make use of this power to warn the husband on his return from Oba. So, as the returning canoe rounded the sandy promontory of La-singo,[2] he transformed himself into two banded rails (*pilagh*), a male and a female, and he made the male rail chase the female along the shore till she yielded and they copulated.

Now the husband saw this from his canoe, and, recognising that it must be the work of a *Ghamba Lep*, determined to find out what had happened. So he went home, and beat his wife till she confessed her transgression, saying that she had lain with the Handillagh man. So the men of Lavame fought those of Handillagh till the decimated survivors of the latter took refuge in the village of Singon, and those who remained of Lavame left Vao and established themselves in a new village of the same name on the mainland. This village has now died out, the only survivors being one man and his two sons, who, having returned to Vao, are now living at Togh-vanu.

Physical Types

The result of this dual origin of the population still shows itself in a variation in physical type remarkable in so small an island. Thus Speiser comments that "it is possible today to distinguish clearly on Vao two types, the Melanesian type from Malekula, dark-skinned, thick-set and frizzly-haired, and the type from Oba, lighter-skinned, more slender and often with almost curly hair." [3] Owing to intermarriage, however, this variation in type is no longer correlated with any existing topographical divisions, but occurs sporadically throughout the whole population, which now forms a single cultural unit closely knit together through ties of kinship.

ORIGINS OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Turning once more to the evidence regarding the origin and nature of the existing social organisation, four sets of facts present themselves:

(*a*) The mythological data concerning the creation of the inhabitants of Pete-hul through the direct agency of Ta-ghar.
(*b*) Accounts of the subsequent formation of its offshoot village Togh-vanu.
(*c*) The genealogies.
(*d*) The kinship system.

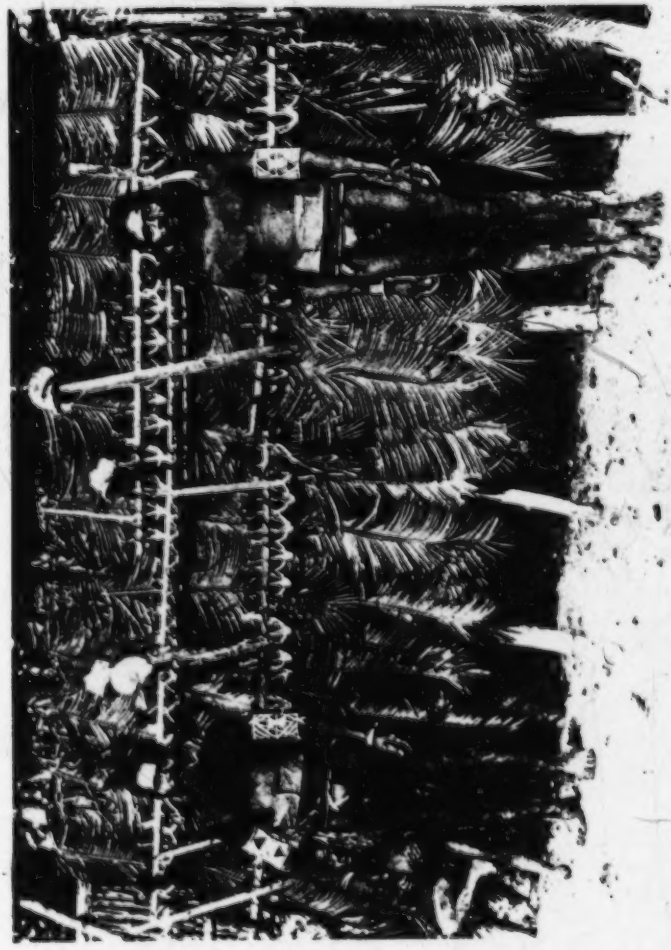
I propose first to examine the mythological data and the genealogies.

[1] See p. 238. [2] Possibly Singon. [3] Speiser, 3, pp. 59-60.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
QO12 Malekula OO12

PLATE XX

142
291
302
282

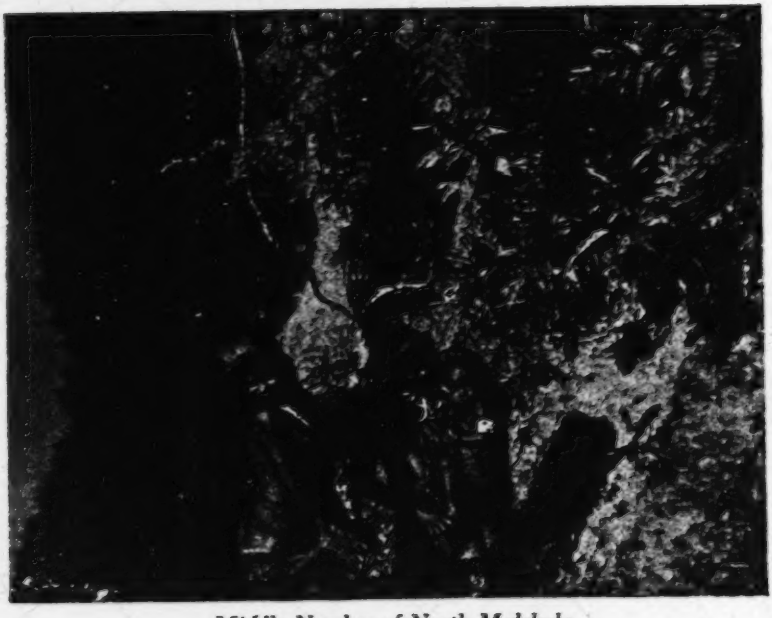


Racks displaying the tusked jaws of boars sacrificed at the consecration of a whaler at the village of Emil Parav on Atchin. The two men are joint "owners" of the "canoe." Two of their arm badges bear the design called *uma*, seen also in Fig. 84

[facing p. 468]

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
0012 Malekula 0012
Pygmies
Nambas
148
291

Pygmoid people from central South Malekula



Middle Nambas of North Malekula

[facing p. 332]